

**COUNCIL WORK SESSION
CITY OF WATERTOWN
February 4, 2008
6:00 P.M.**

MAYOR JEFFREY E. GRAHAM PRESIDING

PRESENT: **COUNCIL MEMBER ROXANNE M. BURNS
COUNCIL MEMBER JOSEPH M. BUTLER, JR.
COUNCIL MEMBER PETER L. CLOUGH
COUNCIL MEMBER JEFFREY M. SMITH
MAYOR GRAHAM**

ALSO PRESENT: **CITY MANAGER MARY M. CORRIVEAU**

City of Watertown Street Tree Program 1994-2008

Michael Lumbis, City Planner, presented an overview of this program to the Council. He outlined the history of the program. Mr. Lumbis explained that the City was awarded various tree planting grants from the NYSDEC Urban and Community Forestry Program for tree maintenance as well as planting along Emerson Place and in the Stream Parking Lot in 2003-2005. There have been 4,714 trees planted City wide between 1994-2007. Mr. Lumbis discussed the current annual spring tree planting efforts. The current funding is \$11,000. The \$10,000 for the trees is reduced a total of \$3,000 through as \$2,500 by Rotary tree grant a \$500 National Grid tree grant. The other \$1,000 is for mulch and other supplies. 50 trees are planted by the Rotary with assistance from the City and 90 trees are planted by the City DPW. He outlined the staffing commitment that is needed to do this program. Mr. Lumbis discussed 4 different options that might be available to expand the program.

Council Member Butler asked about the process in requesting a tree for your property.

Mr. Lumbis explained that people phone in and request a tree. City staff then inspects the site to see the amount of room and if there are utility wires involved. Trees are selected based on the location of the planting. The property owner's name is placed on a list and when planting occurs, they receive a tree as well as a street tree care sheet.

Council Member Butler remarked that if this program were advertised and promoted, more trees would be requested and that would be a step in the right direction.

Mrs. Corriveau commented that part of her concern is staffing. Spring plantings have an impact on the mowing crews. She also explained that the City crews dig all the holes for the trees.

Council Member Clough remarked that it seems as if the City is meeting the needs of the residents.

Council Member Butler responded that no one knows about this program. However, if it is promoted, 100 additional trees would be great.

Mrs. Corriveau commented that she is not sure that the City has adequate staff to plant 100 more trees.

After discussion, Council agreed to consider an additional 100 trees during upcoming budget deliberations based on option 4 in the presentation.

Curbside Bulk Pickup

Peter Monaco, Assistant DPW Superintendent, discussed the bulk pickup program that occurred in October 2000. The project took two weeks and 9 crew members. They picked up 135 tons during that time. It took a month to catch up with the green waste collection as a result of this pickup. He stated that it puts a tremendous strain on manpower. He also explained that the drop off that is now held twice a year gets about 200 customers in the spring and 150 in the fall and works very well.

Council Member Smith remarked that he thought that at one time there were discussions about letting residents call and schedule to have white goods picked up at the curb.

Mr. Monaco explained that there were discussions. However, the program was cut from the budget. He also commented that when a new appliance is delivered, the store will take the old one a way for a small fee. He also said that residents can take white goods to the county's transfer site free of charge. He explained that DPW takes small items such as microwaves, if a couple of stickers are placed on them. He also reminded Council that a bulk pickup would still have disposal costs associated with it.

Discussion was held relative to the tote program. About 800 customers use the City totes. In addition 17,000 stickered bags were picked up last month.

Council Member Clough asked that the prior information concerning letting residents call and schedule a pickup be updated and reported back to Council.

Council Member Burns remarked that while all agree that they want to do some type of curbside bulk pickup; no decision can be made this evening without the numbers.

Mrs. Corriveau advised that at this time there is no schedule of fees, no personnel and no equipment to do this type of project.

Council Member Smith remarked that he would like to explore the possibility of doing away with stickers and making everyone use a tote. He stated that he is looking at this in the long term and for more efficiency. He explained that trucks could be purchased with the pickup arms so the driver wouldn't even have to get out of the vehicle.

Mr. Monaco remarked that the trucks with arms work better in warmer climates.

Council Member Smith responded that they are used in Alaska.

Council Member Clough commented that the number of stickers used each week show that people are happy with them. He also remarked that many communities have stopped offering bulk pickups.

Mrs. Corriveau asked Council who would be billed if a tenant requested a curbside bulk pickup- the tenant or the property owner.

Council Member Smith expressed his desire to know the cost estimate for on-demand year round curbside bulk pickup.

Council Member Butler asked about the cost for hiring two additional summer time employees having the use of a truck for this program.

Mrs. Corriveau will have the information compiled by City staff and prepare a report on the requests.

Credit Cards/ACH Payments

Mr. Mills explained that he has gotten initial pricing costs, but pricing will be determined by the demand.

Council Member Burns commented that the General Brown School District accepts payments on line and assesses a charging fee. She said that this has received a positive response.

Discussion was held concerning credit cards and the fact that the City needs to be able to accept credit cards on line.

Mr. Mills commented that the City Clerk is the only office that accepts credit cards in City Hall at this time.

Mrs. Dutton explained that her office has accepted credit cards since 1990 and now accepts debit cards as well. The user fee is \$6.00 for credit and \$2.50 for debit. Customers use this service every day, whether from hundreds of miles away or in person in the office. She explained that this is offered through the Vital Check Network which is a national credit card service that specializes in municipalities and court systems.

Summer Recreation Programs

Jayme St. Croix, Superintendent of Parks and Recreation, presented reports outlining the summer recreation programs. He explained that they are requesting an intern from Cortland that will help with ideas and make recommendations for programs. A teen survey will be done, in conjunction with the Jefferson County Youth Bureau, in an effort to find out what teens would like to see made available. The YMCA has been talking with the department about the possibility

of making a golf program available. A tennis coach has been lined up and they are currently looking into options to produce that program.

Mrs. Corriveau explained that talks should be held with JCC to see about using their tennis courts for a summer program.

Mr. St. Croix explained that the board games and the arts& crafts are done at each of the 10 city playgrounds during the summer programs.

Discussion was held relative to the facility improvements in the areas of covered trash receptacles and handicap rest rooms. Mr. St. Croix presented his report concerning this.

Council Member Burns commented that nothing says the City has to replace all 50 trash receptacles in one year. A replacement program could be started and city staff could make the recommendations for the type that they feel is the best.

Mr. St. Croix commented that the perforated steel receptacle with dome lid would be recommended.

Discussion was held relative to the restroom facilities.

Mr. St. Croix presented a report explaining that the rehabilitation of existing restrooms would be about \$30,000 and to build a brand new structure near the existing water & sewer infrastructure in the Olmsted design would be between \$150,000-\$200,000.

Council Member Clough questioned the advisability of rehabbing with porcelain toilets due to vandalism and asked if the rehab would take care of accessibility issues.

Mr. St. Croix said that it would.

Mayor Graham asked if there was any merit to having a modern building.

Mr. St. Croix commented that a new building would be located in a more convenient location.

Council Member Smith remarked that the bed tax funds could be used for this.

Mayor Graham responded that he would rather see the money go for this than for a bunch of ads.

Council Member Burns remarked that this project should be a priority.

Mrs. Corriveau advised that if some fencing was moved, a new restroom could be placed near the children's zoo.

Council Member Clough commented that the old one still needs rehab.

Mrs. Corriveau stated that she agreed.

Mr. St. Croix also advised Council that an RFP was sent out regarding the arena bathrooms. Five firms responded and the responses were reviewed by the committee. Three were selected to give a presentation. Bernier Carr was selected and they will be sending a contract soon. That contract will then go before Council.

Mrs. Corriveau explained that in the out-years of the capital budget, they are proposing to spend \$1 million at the arena. Staff would like Council's input as to the project priorities.

Council Member Burns responded that her priorities would be for the restrooms and locker rooms.

Council Member Smith responded that he will wait until after the next work session before listing his priorities.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER CLOUGH TO MOVE INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS COLLECTIVE BARGAINING. MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER SMITH AND CARRIED WITH ALL VOTING IN FAVOR THEREOF.

Council moved into Executive Session at 8:58 p.m.

Council finished Executive Session at 9:22 p.m.

Work session ended at 9:22 p.m.

Donna M. Dutton
City Clerk